

Maine Legacy

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The Nature Conservancy

Virginia Lake

"A Forest empire of Lake, Streams, Mountains..."

"Deep in the Maine woods, this magnificent mountain property is set in the foothills of the White Mountains. It is totally secluded and unspoiled, yet within a short drive of the many picturesque and peaceful villages of western Maine. This is a region of scenic splendor and varied recreations.

"The private woodland empire cover 1,775 acres, and encloses Virginia Lake. The deep blue waters of the mile-long lake provide excellent fishing, boating and swimming, and reflect the undulating green hills and mountains. Cecil Mountain and lesser peaks occupy about 1,000 of the 1,775 acres. Riding and hiking trails thread through the pines, inhabited by deer, many varieties of small animals, and wild birds."

*from a sales brochure
prepared by
Previews, Inc. Realtors*

"...In Maine, [the Virginia Lake] acquisition project enjoys the solid support of the Maine Audubon Society, the Natural Resources Council of Maine, and the Maine Chapters of The Nature Conservancy and the Appalachian Mountain Club...Virginia Lake is one of the few undeveloped, low elevation lakes in New England capable of providing both public accessibility and pristine conditions. The tract includes nearly the entire watershed of the lake, as well as productive loon and moose habitat. If acquired, Virginia Lake will easily qualify as the White Mountain National Forest's largest lake."

*Stephen Rice,
Director of Operations
Appalachian Mountain Club
(testimony before
U.S. House of Representatives)*

"This beautiful lake provides critical habitat for loons and moose and offers tremendous opportunities for outdoor recreation in a wilderness setting. If not acquired by the Forest Service, this lake will undoubtedly be subdivided and heavily developed, actions which will destroy its value to wildlife and deny future generations the opportunity of enjoying this unique area."

*Everett Carson,
Executive Director
Natural Resources Council of Maine*

"Clearly, Virginia Lake will make a unique and vital addition to the Forest. While there are many opportunities for developed lakeside recreation in nearby sections of Maine and New Hampshire, Virginia Lake offers the only significant opportunity for low-intensity recreation and the establishment of a substantial lakeside wildlife preserve."

*Charles Hewitt
Executive Director
Maine Audubon Society*

Ten years ago, Virginia Lake was for sale. A full-color brochure offered by a realtor described this "Forest Empire" in glowing prose, highlighting the lake's unspoiled seclusion and its proximity to fine restaurants, shops and outdoor recreation in the White Mountain resort region.

Concerned conservationists in Maine and New Hampshire all considered Virginia Lake to be a top priority acquisition for the White Mountain National Forest (WMNF), but there was no money available to buy it. Fortunately, the property was sold to people who

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Letter from the chair

The Virginia Lake project, described in this issue, is notable not only for its outstanding natural features, but also as a type of transaction becoming exceptionally rare in Maine: a major land acquisition project undertaken by a government agency. (The Conservancy purchased the property on an interim basis; it is scheduled to be repurchased from us by the U.S. Forest Service later this year.)

Until a few years ago, government conservation agencies played by far the largest role in acquiring land to create new parks, wildlife refuges, public forests, and the like. Then severe budget problems resulted in a drastic reduction in federal funding for land acquisition. In Maine, for example, allocations to the state from the federal Land and Water Conservation Fund declined rapidly from over \$3 million to less than \$300,000 per year. Authorization for these funds expires in 1989. State funding, modest to begin with, has not yet been augmented to pick up the slack.

As a result, most of the burden of protecting biologically significant natural areas has fallen to the private sector, notably The Nature Conservancy. In recent years, the Conservancy has spent more money to protect habitat for Maine's rare and endangered species, or exemplary natural communities, than all state and federal agencies combined.

We are proud to be playing this critical emergency role. But it would be irresponsible for us to suggest that the Conservancy can assume more than a fraction of the burden borne previously by government

agencies...or protect more than a fraction of the outstanding natural areas being lost to development with increasing rapidity.

Fortunately, there are encouraging signs that Maine's government leaders are beginning to recognize the urgent necessity of increasing the state's role in natural land protection. Late last year, the Governor's Commission on Outdoor Recreation recommended a bond issue that would provide \$5 million per year over the next 10 years for land acquisition. The State Planning Office proposed a land acquisition trust funded at a level of at least \$3 million per year. And, at the polls, a \$5 million bond issue for Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife land purchases passed by the highest margin of any referendum on the ballot.

We hope that Maine's government leadership will continue to pursue these proposals and make a major new commitment to public land acquisition. We are anxious to assist: by helping to locate the most critical areas, by negotiating purchases on the most favorable terms possible, and by engaging in joint protection projects. In 1986, the Conservancy purchased over \$15 million worth of prime natural land on behalf of government agencies in the other New England states. We'd like to be working on an equivalent scale in Maine, helping—through public-private partnerships—to insure that the magnificent landscape legacy we've inherited will be available to future generations of Maine's citizens.

Ellen Wells

Plains option exercised

The campaign to raise funds to acquire more than 100 acres of important habitat for endangered wildlife at the Kennebunk Plains can now be declared a resounding success. The generous and timely donations of hundreds of Chapter members and Kennebunk area residents, combined with major grants from the Sachs Foundation, Kennebunk Savings Bank, Kennebunk Water District, and Central Maine Power, made it possible for the Chapter to meet its goal of raising the money to buy the land and provide for a permanent stewardship endowment. The Conservancy exercised its option at the end of 1986; final closing on the Kennebunk Plains property is expected in early 1987.

Central Maine Power Company owns a powerline right-of-way that crosses through the Plains. CMP has now agreed principal



The Kennebunk Plains

to a management lease that will allow the Conservancy to manage the CMP land and the adjoining preserve as a whole. Vegetation along the powerline will be controlled by cutting, eliminating the need for herbicides that would harm the Plain's threatened plants and animals.

Memorial gifts

Gifts in memory of the following individuals have been received by the Maine Chapter.

Joseph and Mary Byram
Nancy Stewart Deming
Ethel Moyer Dyer
Thomas Irving Crowell
John E. Irland
Scott Edgar Krahn
J. Mark Kjelgaard
Frederick Hillman
Margaret J. Magee
Nelson B. Record
Claire Stones

Corporate memberships

We are pleased to have received support from the following and welcome them as corporate members of the Maine Chapter.

A.E. Hutchinson Agency
Anonymous
Deering Lumber Co.
Falcon Shoe Manufacturing Co.
Maine Mall Motors
Michael Mahan Graphics
New System Laundry, Inc.
Peter Coe Realty
Queens Group NJ, Inc.
Seven Islands Land Company

New life members

Any gift of \$1,000 or more to the Maine Chapter Land Preservation Fund provides a life membership for the donor and spouse in the Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. All such gifts furnish a long-term source of support to help save land here in Maine.

We are pleased to welcome as life members:

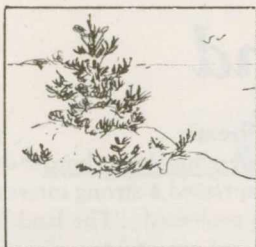
Anonymous
Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. George Ballantyne
Reinier and Nancy Beeuwkes
Olcott and Jane Gates
Ralph and Liedeke Lagopian
Mary Minor C.S. and
James B. Lannon
Maxwell L. McCormack, Jr.
Mrs. Harrie B. Price, III
Virginia L. Rafool
Norman and Elizabeth Weeks



Maine Legacy

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in the news



Job openings

For many years, the Maine Chapter has hired one to several summer interns to help with stewardship of Maine preserves, conduct natural resource inventories, coordinate easement monitoring, and generally pitch in wherever needed. However, as the stewardship job has grown, it has become evident that we need the added time, experience, and (especially) continuity of a permanent year-round assistant for the Stewardship Program. Accordingly, the Chapter is now accepting applications for a new year-round stewardship assistant, who will begin work in mid-April, 1987.

In addition, as in previous years, we will be hiring summer caretakers for the Damariscove Island, Douglas Mountain, and Great Wass Island preserves. The two Damariscove Island caretaker-naturalists serve as a team and live on the island for 13 weeks. The Douglas Mountain and Great Wass preserve caretaker positions are both part-time and can best be filled by people who live near each of these preserves and are familiar with the area.

In cooperation with the Small Point Association, Maine Audubon Society, and the state Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Nongame Program, the Chapter will also be hiring a plover/tern warden to continue the monitoring and protection efforts for the piping plover and least tern colonies on Seawall Beach, Phippsburg.

The application deadline for the stewardship assistant, summer caretaker and warden positions is March 13. Anyone interested in applying should request a job description; to apply, please send a resume and letter of interest to Barbara Vickery at the Chapter office, P.O. Box 338, Topsham, Maine 04086, telephone: 729-5181. For more information, please call Barbara Vickery.

The iceman will not cometh

The Damariscove Island caretakers are in need of a small, used, and cheap (or better yet, free) camp refrigerator that runs on either gas or kerosene. If you have one to donate or sell, we can guarantee it a home with a marvelous view and a pair of

extremely grateful caretakers. Please contact Barbara Vickery at the Chapter office, 729-5181.

Wanderers from the north

This is a winter of snowy owls. As of mid-January, at least 15 had been reported in the coastal area west of Penobscot Bay. This is nothing new for Damariscove Island, where there has been a snowy owl wintering every year for at least a decade. But this year a snowy owl has also taken up winter residence on Three Herons Island Preserve, just off Seawall Beach. Using a spotting scope, it is possible to see the owl from the beach. It often perches on the exposed dead snag on top of the island.



Snowy owl

Nature on PBS

Since the end of last year, The Nature Conservancy has been participating in the presentation of *Nature*, a natural history series on public television.

A national presentation of WNET-New York in association with The Nature Conservancy, the program is made possible by grants from public television and the American Gas Association. Robert Jenkins, the Conservancy's Vice-President for Science Programs, is the principal science advisor to the series.

Nature is shown weekly on most PBS

stations. (Usually Sunday at 8 p.m.) The following is a schedule of future programs:

Feb. 22	Fujisan 1 - See No Evil
March 1	Fujisan 2 - Bird of Happiness
March 8	Fujisan 3 - Long Live the Turtle
March 15	Wild Horses
March 22	The Plant Hunters
March 29	Kalahari: Wilderness Without Water
April 5	One Man's Island
April 12	Holy Land 1: A Wilderness Like Eden
April 19	Holy Land 2: Sweet Water, Bitter Sea
April 26	Garden Life
May 3	Selva Verde
May 10	Lords of Hokkaido
May 17	Animal Builders
May 24	Masked Monkeys
May 31	The Feathered Swarm
June 7	Battle of the Leaves
June 14	The Gooneys of Midway
June 21	Emas: High Plains of Brazil
June 28	The Skyhunters
July 5	Aspen - Dancer on the Wind
July 12	Where Eagles Fly

The Nature Conservancy is proud to be associated with this highly acclaimed natural history series. We hope you'll be watching.

Mussel power

If you've ever gone foraging for mussels you know how difficult it can be to wrench them from their chosen quarters on the rocks. Mussels produce a sticky protein-based adhesive that holds them fast against waves and surges, as well as humans, raccoons and other potential diners.

A synthetic version of this incredibly tenacious protein glue may soon find its way into your mouth—without the mussel and garlic butter. Dr. J. Herbert Waite of the University of Connecticut Health Center identified, and then was able to synthesize, the mussel glue. The glue works in wet and dry environments, sticks to just about anything, and is a natural, inert substance.

The new glue may be used by dentists to fill cavities and create a bond between teeth and gums to aid periodontal surgery. Surgeons envision it as a coating for incisions that will help prevent infections, and believe that it can also be used to reconnect small bones and tendons.

From "Research News," National Institute of Dental Research, Jody Dove.

Peter Vickery

A threatened and unusual peatland

For many years, ecologists and naturalists, joined by the Maine Chapter and other conservation groups, have worried about the fate of Saco Heath. Threatened by mining, and located in a rapidly developing part of the state, the heath seemed destined to be mined, and left as an excavated lake or turned into a housing development.

Thanks to a generous gift from Joseph Deering and his family, the Maine Chapter has now acquired a critically important 475-acre portion of Saco Heath.

Joseph Deering explained his desire to donate his property on the heath, "I want to see it protected," he said. "I don't want anybody with plans to develop it to get their hands on it."

A northern peatland

Saco Heath is a special type of peatland known as a raised coalesced bog. In other words, the bog's domed surface has grown above the influence of the local water table (raised), and the bog as it appears today was formed when two domes that began separately in adjacent basins gradually joined together (coalesced).

Climate plays a vital role in the development of raised bogs. Since the surface of the bog is isolated from the water table, the sphagnum mosses, shrubs and other plants that make up the bog are completely dependent upon rainfall for moisture and nutrients. (See box.)

Raised bogs are found throughout Canada and the northern part of the United States, where cool temperatures and steady precipitation throughout the year supply plenty of moisture, creating conditions ideal for their formation. Saco Heath is the southernmost example of a raised coalesced bog known to occur in America.

One of Maine's largest stands of Atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*) grows here, the only known occurrence of Atlantic white cedar on a raised bog. The wood of this species is aromatic, durable and very desirable. As a result, it has been heavily logged through most of its range. The Conservancy's Natural Heritage Program considers undisturbed Atlantic white cedar stands to be globally endangered.

In recognition of the importance of its stand of Atlantic white cedar and special peatland natural community, the state has registered the Saco Heath as a Critical Area.

Although no streams flow into the heath, it lies at the head of six streams which are the primary source of water for the city of

Saco. The bog's layers of peat absorb a tremendous amount of water, helping to prevent floods by soaking up the excess. This saturated peat also retains its moisture, supplying water during droughts.

The spectre of peat mining

The heath has long been threatened by peat mining. There have been several abortive attempts to mine the heath; fortunately, these caused little damage to the ecological integrity of the bog. Recently, the company that currently owns a substantial portion of the remainder of the 800- to 1,000-acre heath announced definite plans to mine the bog and log the cedar for fence poles. Fortunately, the necessary state permits were denied and the project now appears to be defunct. The Chapter will review any new mining proposals with great care to assess the damage to the heath.

Preserving the heath

Many of the people whose lands border on the heath have expressed a strong interest in seeing the bog protected. "The land in there is beautiful and peaceful," explained landowner Faith Tripp. She also pointed out that it is rare to find so much original, undeveloped land in a rapidly growing area such as Saco. Concerned about potential damage to the peatland ecosystem and threats to groundwater presented by the planned mining project, neighboring landowners have met to discuss conservation easements and other ways to protect their properties and the heath.

The Deerings' generous gift of the Saco Heath Preserve ensures that a major portion of this unusual peatland will be protected, giving scientists and other visitors the chance to study, explore and appreciate its special character and beauty.

by Lissa Widoff and Ruth Hill

The Saco Heath



Walking across the bog is disconcerting at first. After you wade through the surrounding moat, or *lagg*, the bog's surface becomes firmer, yet undulates gently with each step. The bog's surface is watery and yielding, giving the impression that one false step will send you straight through the green mat, doomed to be pickled for eternity.

Despite appearances, the saturated Sphagnum mosses (peat mosses) can hold your weight, that of the cedars and shrubs which grow on the heath—and they can also hold up to eight times their weight in water. This incredible ability to retain water explains how the water table in a bog becomes raised or "perched." The sphagnum mosses become established late in the development of a bog, when the original shallow, water-filled basin becomes packed with the undecomposed remains of plants. They capture rainwater and continue to grow upward, bringing the water table with them through capillary action within the moss mat.

Bog-trotting with discretion

As you walk through a bog, your feet compact the mosses, creating little pools. If too many people walk through the bog, the areas subject to heavy traffic will eventually lose their ability to spring back and the mosses and plants associated with them such as orchids, sundews and pitcher plants will drown in standing water. And, although much of the bog can easily support your weight, there are pools (often hidden by a mat of floating red sphagnum) that can be a very wet surprise indeed.

Bogs are fascinating, fragile places. Please use care and judgment when contemplating an excursion to a bog. Sitting quietly near the bog edge or taking the time to discover all the unique plants in a square yard of bog are frequently much more rewarding pursuits for the naturalist, and far less damaging to the bog community, than logging throughout the entire bog.

ANNUAL REPORT



A look at the year 1986

For the Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, its 30th anniversary was one of its most exciting and productive years ever. The Chapter completed 10 land protection projects, protecting more than 2,500 acres of prime natural lands with an estimated value of \$1.5 million. These included:

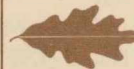
- a threatened peatland, together with an undisturbed stand of globally threatened Atlantic white cedar;
- nesting islands for common eiders, black guillemots and Leach's storm petrels as well as roosting and nesting island sites for bald eagles and ospreys;
- expansion of a preserve that protects a half mile of Kennebunk River shoreline;
- one of Maine's largest populations of the endangered small whorled pogonia orchid;
- the largest undeveloped lake in the White Mountain region.

In addition, the Chapter undertook two more major projects: the campaigns to acquire and protect 3,800 acres of virgin forest wilderness at Big Reed Pond; and more than 100 acres of threatened grassland habitat, supporting several state-endangered species, at the Kennebunk Plains. Once again, Chapter supporters rose promptly and selflessly to the cause. By year-end, the \$1.1 million Big Reed Pond campaign had almost reached the halfway mark with total gifts and pledges of \$525,000. And the Kennebunk Plains effort had raised the \$115,000 needed to buy the land and provide for a stewardship endowment, allowing the Chapter to exercise its purchase option.

Finding new and creative ways to protect even more land in Maine, the Chapter became involved in many cooperative projects with federal, state and private conservation agencies. Some of the year's most important and interesting projects, including Big Reed Pond and the Virginia Lake addition to the White Mountain National Forest, required months of involved negotiations between the Conservancy, the landowners, state and federal agencies, and other conservation groups. The Chapter also launched its new Voluntary Landowner Protection Program. The program proved an immediate success; already, thoughtful landowners have agreed to help protect the special features on 19 separate properties.

As always, Chapter members gave generously in many ways. Volunteers helped look after the Chapter's 70 preserves, searched for rare plants and amphibians, illustrated preserve brochures and led field trips.

The Chapter has come a long way in the past 30 years, from a small group of dedicated individuals to a major private land conservation organization—an enduring institution, with more than 10,000 active supporters, that has protected nearly 27,000 acres of Maine's most beautiful and threatened natural lands. Looking toward the Chapter's 60th anniversary in the year 2016, it is clear the challenges of the next 30 years promise to be greater and even more exciting than those of the past.



TRUSTEES

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Farmington
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LAND PROTECTION

Saco Heath Preserve

Saco

Long threatened by mining, the Saco Heath is an unusual peatland of great interest to ecologists. It is the southernmost peatland of its kind in America, and also supports one of Maine's largest stands of the globally endangered Atlantic white cedar.

The 475-acre Saco Heath Preserve is the gift of Joseph Deering and his family.

Brimstone Islands Preserve

Vinalhaven

Brimstone Island (37 acres), Little Brimstone Island (five acres) and Holden Ledge came to the Chapter as a gift from Sheila English, Elinor Montgomery and Alexander White, who also generously donated a stewardship endowment for the preserve. The Brimstones are a sanctuary for many nesting seabirds, including black guillemots, common eiders and Leach's storm petrels.

Butler-Marshall Preserve, additions

Kennebunk

Three additions of undivided interests to the Butler-Marshall Preserve on the Kennebunk River were generously donated by Joyce and Robert Butler and Dorothy Jane Butler. The preserve protects over one-half mile of river frontage, and is a favorite spot for picnicking and swimming. School classes and other groups often use the preserve on environmental education field trips.

Bob Butler is a former chairman and trustee of the Maine Chapter.

Pickering Island, easement

Deer Isle

A conservation easement protecting this scenic and heavily-wooded 225-acre island in East Penobscot Bay was donated to the Chapter by David and Virginia Wakelin. A favorite of passing sailors, the island is known for its 13 splendid beaches. Pickering Island lies within an archipelago



Pickering Island

of islands and coastal properties protected by the Conservancy, state and other conservation agencies.

David Wakelin is a former chairman, vice-chairman and trustee of the Maine Chapter.

Isotria site, easement

Southwestern Maine

This 46-acre easement protects one of Maine's largest populations of the endangered orchid, the small whorled pogonia, *Isotria medeoloides*. The easement was given in memory of Gladys I. Briggs by her family.

Virginia Lake, transfer

Stoneham and Lovell

For many years conservationists and the U.S. Forest Service have sought to add Virginia Lake to the White Mountain National Forest. The largest undeveloped lake in the White Mountain region, Virginia Lake is a very popular place to fish, hike, and cross-country ski.

At the request of the landowners and the Forest Service, the Conservancy agreed to help overcome obstacles of funding and timing by purchasing the property for subsequent resale to the U.S. Forest Service. The Conservancy has acquired 1,690 acres of wooded hills surrounding the lake, as well as a 25-acre conservation easement on an adjoining property for nearly \$1 million. The acquisition of Virginia Lake by the U.S. Forest Service has been approved by Congress; the Conservancy will transfer the Virginia Lake parcels to the White Mountain National Forest when federal funds become available in the spring of 1987.

Big Reed Pond, option

T8R10

The Chapter secured an option that allows the Conservancy to acquire 3,800 acres of virgin forest wilderness and two isolated, unspoiled forest ponds in

northern Maine. The challenging campaign to raise more than \$1.1 million required to purchase and provide for long-term management of the land was almost at the halfway mark by year-end.

Early leadership of the Big Reed campaign came from within the Conservancy's "immediate family": current and former Chapter trustees, members of the National Board of Governors, and Chapter staff have so far contributed \$160,000... almost 15 percent of the total goal.

Big Reed Pond is the largest fund-raising effort ever undertaken by the Maine Chapter. But the price of losing this forest wilderness is incalculable. New England's largest old-growth forest, Big Reed also accounts for two-thirds of the old-growth left in Maine and is one of the few examples of an unaltered, primeval forest ecosystem remaining in New England.

Kennebunk Plains, option

Kennebunk

Hundreds of generous donations from Chapter members and Kennebunk area citizens and businesses enabled the Chapter to secure an option and raise the funds needed to acquire and preserve more than 100 acres of the Kennebunk Plains. The Plains is home to at least five species of endangered plants and animals. They include the state-endangered grasshopper sparrow and black racer snake, as well as the world's largest population of northern blazing star, a beautiful purple wildflower threatened throughout its range.

The Conservancy's preserve will protect a key portion of the Plains' unusual grassland vegetation, and the endangered grasshopper sparrows that depend upon it. The Kennebunk Plains also provides critically needed open space and sanctuary for wildlife in a part of the state that is currently experiencing rapid and extensive development. Closing on the property is expected in early 1987.

STAFF

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The Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy

"The mission of The Nature Conservancy is to preserve the full array of biological diversity by finding, protecting and maintaining the best examples of communities, ecosystems and endangered species occurrences in our natural world."

The Nature Conservancy is a national, nonprofit conservation organization which devotes its resources to identifying, protecting and managing biologically significant natural areas and the variety of life dependent upon them. To date, the Conservancy and its members have been responsible for the preservation of over 2,600,000 acres of forests, marshes, prairies, deserts, mountains, and islands. The Conservancy obtains virtually all its support through private, tax-deductible contributions.

Since its founding in 1956, the Maine Chapter of The Nature Conservancy has protected over 25,000 acres of Maine's finest natural lands. In recent years, it has acquired an average of one million dollars worth of property annually. Most lands acquired are retained by the Chapter; some, however, are subsequently trans-

ferred to state, municipal and federal agencies in Maine for conservation and recreational purposes.

With the help of more than 10,000 individual, corporate and foundation supporters, the Maine Chapter has assembled the largest system of privately owned nature preserves in the state. Its holdings include Maine's single largest seabird nesting colony (home to 20 percent of the state's entire nesting seabird population); New England's largest great blue heron rookery; 11 bald eagle nesting sites; and several old-growth forests. Several preserves, including 4,100-acre Crystal Bog, protect nationally endangered rare plants. The Chapter has protected 34 coastal islands, making it the largest private owner of islands in Maine.

Each year, an estimated 25,000 people visit the Chapter's preserves, on their own or as participants in the Chapter's guided field trips. Nature study, picnicking, birdwatching, and other appropriate recreational activities are allowed on most of the Chapter's preserves. An illustrated guide to 50 preserves, including maps and natural history information, is available from the Chapter office in Topsham.

STEWARDSHIP

Through its Science and Stewardship Program, the Chapter ensures continued protection of its lands. With the help of hundreds of volunteer land stewards, Chapter staff manages the Chapter's 70 preserves and monitors 11,000 acres of easements and transferred lands. Research done on the preserves provides new information about Maine's threatened species, and helps the Chapter plan for the best long-term protection of its natural areas.

In 1986, Maine Chapter Stewardship staff, volunteers and research contractors:

- monitored 106 properties for which the Chapter has legal responsibilities; no violations were found;
- prepared preliminary stewardship plans for Great Duck Island, Big Reed Pond and the Kennebunk Plains;
- removed six decaying buildings and lots of unsightly and unsafe refuse from Great Duck Island;
- inventoried new additions to Crumple Island, Crystal Bog, and Woodland Bog preserves, and in the process, discovered a new population of round-leaved orchid (*Amerorchis rotundifolia*) at Woodland Bog;
- installed fencing, and monitored the

nesting colonies of the endangered piping plover and least tern at Seawall Beach;

- welcomed 1,429 visitors to Damariscove Island, 5,405 to Douglas Mountain, 1,163 to Great Wass Island, and 8,584 to Indian Point-Blagden.

- prepared new brochures for Indian Point-Blagden, Step Falls, Crockett Cove, and Great Wass Island as well as new bird checklists for Indian Point-Blagden and Great Wass;

- installed new signs at the Rachel Carson Salt Pond, Douglas Mountain and Mistake Island preserves;

- maintained dozens of miles of trails;
- raised a \$20,000 stewardship endowment for the Kennebunk Plains;

- inoculated American chestnut trees against blight at the Harkness Preserve;

- discovered 179 species of lichens on old-growth trees at Big Reed Pond;

- helped monitor four populations of the endangered small whorled pogonia orchid (*Isotria medeoloides*);

- joined members of other land conservation groups in discussions of land management techniques at a Stewardship Workshop in May;

- hosted more than 250 participants on 14 field trips to Chapter preserves.



Thomas Arter

Tiger swallowtail

HERITAGE

The Natural Heritage Program represents the identification phase of the Chapter's work. The heart of the program is a computerized data base containing site information on Maine's special plants, animals and natural communities.

Perhaps our most important step for the year 1986 was the addition of part-time ecologist Lissa Widoff to our staff. With funds from the Appalachian Mountain Club and the State Planning Office, she completed a survey of pitch pine barrens, a globally threatened natural community. She also continued the important job of finding and classifying Maine's sensitive natural communities.

Sharing information and joining together in cooperative research projects, the Heritage Program works with many state agencies concerned with protection of Maine's wildlife and natural world. For example, the state Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife's Nongame Program contracted with the Heritage Program for a survey of rare invertebrates, including rare moths of pitch pine barrens and the dorcas copper butterfly, a candidate for listing as a federal endangered species. Heritage Program staff also helped the state Land Use Regulation Commission with its study of lakes in the unorganized townships, assessing shoreline features and scenic values.

In the private sector, Heritage researchers inventoried several of Central Maine Power's hydropower facilities for rare and endangered species and natural communities. State agencies, private consultants, developers, towns, and scientists all worked with the Heritage Program to help protect sensitive species and habitats.

Heritage staff, contractors and volunteers carried on the search for rare and sometimes obscure species. Notable finds for the year included two new species for Maine: the crowberry blue butterfly, found in bogs Downeast, and the pine vole, a relative of the meadow vole (or mouse) that was discovered by biologists from the Rachel Carson National Wildlife Refuge.

FINANCES

The continuing support of the Conservancy's members and friends permitted the Maine Chapter to have another strong year, protecting approximately 2,500 acres worth an estimated \$1.5 million.

Current gifts and pledges of some \$170,000 to our operating budget, and of more than \$600,000 to the Kennebunk Plains and Big Reed Pond campaigns, were obviously critical to our success. Less obvious, but no less critical, were three major bequests from the estates of the late Rachel Carson, Lispenard Crocker, and Warner and Edith Eustis.

The great majority of our stewardship budget, and important components of other programs, are financed through earnings produced by permanent endowment funds. In recent years, high interest rates produced unusually high yields, which enabled the Maine Chapter to meet the stewardship obligations associated with new land acquisitions and to undertake important new initiatives such as our Natural Heritage inventory of outstanding natural areas. However, when interest rates dropped precipitously in 1986, we would have experienced severe budget and program cutbacks had it not been for significant new financial resources provided through the bequests of those committed to land conservation over the long haul. We are grateful to Miss Rachel Carson (a founding trustee), Mrs. Lispenard Crocker, and Mr. and Mrs. Warner Eustis—and to those who follow their example—for their legacies to future generations.

Memorial gifts

Gifts in memory of the following individuals were received in 1986 by the Maine Chapter:

Helen L. Butler
Joseph and Mary Byram
Thomas Irving Crowell
Nancy Stewart Deming
Ethel Moyer Dyer
Paul Favour
Robert B. Fraser
William and Gertrude Gray
Ludwig August Hesselschwerdt
Frederick Hillman
Sterling Dow, III
John E. Irland
Richard Saltonstall, Jr.
J. Mark Kjellaard
Scott Edgar Krahn
Margaret J. Magee
Wilmer McGowan
Priscilla Montgomery
Samuel Morse
Major Thomas Nickerson
Ernest A. Niles
Edward A. Race
Nelson B. Record
Norton Lamb, Sr.
Claire Stoner
Marion Vedder
Dr. R.A. Waldron
John L. Washbourne
Doris Wolfers

Life members

We were pleased to welcome the following life members in 1986.

Anonymous
Anonymous
Anonymous
Mr. and Mrs. George Ballantyne
Ralph and Liedeke Lagopian
Mary Minor C. S. and James B. Lannon
Maxwell L. McCormack, Jr.
Mrs. Harrie B. Price, III
Virginia L. Rafool
Norman and Elizabeth Weeks

Corporate memberships

Annual memberships in the Maine Chapter are available to corporations in four categories: Chapter Associate, \$1,000; Corporate Sponsor, \$500; Corporate Contributor, \$250; Corporate Member, \$100.

National Corporate Associate dues begin at \$1,000 and are split between the national office and appropriate state offices.

National Corporate Associates

L.L. Bean
J.M. Huber Corporation

Chapter Corporate Associates

Kennebunk Savings Bank
Wood Structures, Inc.

Chapter Corporate Sponsors

Guy Gannett Foundation
Penobscot Bay Conservation Association

Chapter Corporate Contributors

Deering Lumber Company
Peoples Heritage Bank
Peter Coe Realty
Ram Management Co.

Chapter Corporate Members

A.E. Hutchinson Agency
Anonymous
Black Spruce Type/Graphics
Cooper Industries Foundation
Deering Lumber Company
Dionne & Brunette Associates
Falcon Shoe Manufacturing Co.
Laird, Norton Foundation
Maine Color Service
Maine Mall Motors
Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Fenner, & Smith
Michael Mahan Graphics
Morong-Falmouth
New System Laundry
Peter Coe Realty
Queens Group NJ, Inc.
Seven Islands Land Co.
Sunday River Inn & Ski Touring Center
Sunday River Ski Resort

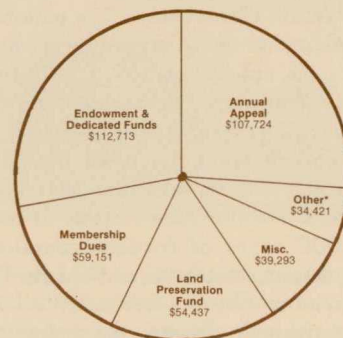
The bottom line

In 1986, for every dollar contributed to the Chapter's operating budget through dues and annual appeal gifts, we managed to protect approximately \$8.75 worth of prime natural land in addition to managing a statewide preserve system of 70 nature sanctuaries and maintaining the most comprehensive data base on the locations of rare flora and fauna in the state of Maine.

The following charts break down the Chapter's operating income and expenses for 1986, and are estimates derived from preliminary financial reports. They do not include major capital expenditures (e.g., land purchases); nor do they include the value of contributions to major land protection campaigns (e.g., Kennebunk

Plains, Big Reed Pond); or the value of donated properties. A complete, audited financial statement for The Nature Conservancy nationally will be published in the annual report issue of *The Nature Conservancy News* later this year.

Income

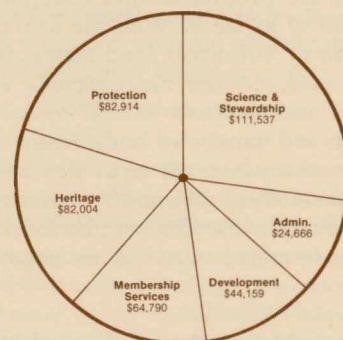


Endowments & Dedicated Funds	28%
Annual Appeal	26%
Membership Dues	15%
Land Preservation Fund	13%
Miscellaneous	10%
Other*	8%

*Includes:

National Subsidies	3%
Contracts/User Fees	3%
Operating Reserve	1%
Foundation Grants	1%

Expenses



Science & Stewardship	27%
Protection	20%
Heritage	20%
Membership Services	16%
Development	11%
Administration	6%



Forest empire

from page one

enjoyed the simple pleasures of the wilderness lake, and who were interested in keeping the land unspoiled and undeveloped.

For the past seven years, conservation groups and the U.S. Forest Service have worked with the landowners, Stuart McCampbell and the McCampbell Trust, to find a way to add Virginia Lake to the White Mountain National Forest. At the urging of many, including the Conservancy, the Natural Resources Council of Maine, Maine Audubon, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, and the Appalachian Mountain Club, as well as the congressional delegations of Maine and New Hampshire, Congress appropriated funds for the U.S. Forest Service to eventually purchase 1,700 acres surrounding Virginia Lake. Local residents (who hold veto power over new additions to the WMNF) gave preliminary approval to the federal acquisition of the land, provided questions of access and tax revenues were satisfactorily addressed.

This fall, the landowners and the Forest Service approached the Conservancy, asking our help in overcoming several obstacles blocking the sale.

The first, and most pressing, problem was the owners' need to complete the sale before year-end to qualify for tax benefits. The federal appropriation would not be available until sometime in the spring of 1987. The Conservancy was able to solve this problem by offering to purchase full fee-simple interest in 1,690 acres, plus a conservation easement on an additional 25 acres, in 1986. The Conservancy's purchase price of close to \$1 million would be recovered through subsequent resale of the property to the WMNF in 1987.

The landowners, and all other interested parties, wanted to be sure that the Forest Service would be required to manage the lake and surrounding forest for its wilderness values, not for timber harvests or "developed" recreation. In October, 1986 Forest Supervisor Michael Hathaway clearly stated the WMNF's plans for Virginia Lake: "Specifically, we intend to manage the recreational resources of the property for dispersed types of activities such as boating, hiking, and cross-country skiing. We do not foresee constructing or permitting developed recreation sites near the lakeshore area. In general, we intend to manage the property so that the present character of the lakeshore area, as seen from the lake, is not substantially altered." The Conservancy will monitor the Virginia Lake properties just as it does every natural

area that it transfers to the care of another agency.

Local residents were concerned that traditional access to the lake would be denied or restricted. For generations, the lake has been a very popular place to fish, ski, and hike. After the Forest Service expressed its firm resolve not to restrict access, to encourage appropriate recreation, and to make adequate provisions for lost tax revenues, local residents formally approved federal acquisition of Virginia Lake.

Just as it seemed that all the details could be worked out before the end of the year, a disturbing rumor crept out of Washington. The rumor soon became reality as George Dunlop, Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture, announced on November 18, 1986 that all funds for U.S. Forest Service purchases—including, of course, Virginia Lake—were to be rescinded.

The response was immediate. Conservationists, as well as congressional delegations from Maine and New Hampshire, formed a united front and went to Washington to urge the department to reverse its decision. On December 12, 1986 the Secretary of

Agriculture announced that the purchase of five White Mountain tracts, including Virginia Lake, would proceed. However, all purchases were to be delayed 30 days until 1987. The Conservancy's agreement to take possession of the land in 1986 suddenly became the critical factor that saved the Virginia Lake effort from another disastrous setback.

By now, the timing was getting a little tight. While other people decked the halls and dreamt of dancing sugar plums, the Chapter's associate director Kent Wommack, joined by TNC's lawyer for the eastern region, Phil Tabas, spent their holidays drafting appropriate legal and financial documents and making sure that all the last minute details were covered. Two days before Christmas, the landowners accepted the final offer from the Conservancy and the Forest Service. Legal papers were ready the day after Christmas. At the last possible moment, former landowners lifted deed restrictions on the property, allowing the sale to proceed. On December 30, the Conservancy closed on the 1,690-acre purchase and 25-acre shorefront conservation easement, securing the protection of Virginia Lake at last.

Chronology of a project

1978

Virginia Lake property put up for sale. TNC discusses interest with landowner, but does not have the funds to buy the land.

1979 to 1984

U.S. Forest Service (USFS) works with landowners and conservation groups, trying to find a way to add Virginia Lake to the White Mountain National Forest.

March 1984

Residents of Stoneham vote conditional approval of USFS acquisition of Virginia Lake pending resolution of access and tax issues.

August 1984

Congress appropriates USFS funding to purchase Virginia Lake at the urging of environmental groups.

1984 to 1986

Negotiations continue between the USFS and the landowners.

September 1986

At the request of the USFS and the landowners, TNC enters negotiations to help break stalemate on purchase agreement.

October 1986

Agreement, dependent on a 1986 closing, is reached on key terms. New appraisal, survey and title work are ordered. TNC agrees to purchase property on behalf of USFS before year-end.

November 19, 1986

Assistant Secretary George Dunlop announces rescission of funds for USFS purchases, including Virginia Lake. Con-

gressional delegations and conservation groups respond strongly.

December 1, 1986

TNC and landowners meet with Stoneham selectmen to seek solution on access and tax issues.

December 10, 1986

TNC and landowners hold informational meeting in Stoneham to explain proposed USFS purchase. Availability of USFS funds still uncertain.

December 12, 1986

Under pressure from Congress and conservation groups, rescission order is reversed. A 30-day waiting period is imposed, delaying all purchases until 1987.

December 17, 1986

At special town meeting, Stoneham residents approve USFS acquisition of the Virginia Lake Property.

December 19, 1986

USFS sends TNC letter of intent formalizing our purchase arrangement.

December 23, 1986

Final offer by USFS and TNC is accepted by landowners, pending lifting of 1978 restrictions imposed by previous landowners.

December 26, 1986

Legal documents are prepared and sent for review to all parties.

December 30, 1986

Former landowners lift 1978 restrictions, clearing the way for TNC's purchase. TNC closes on 1,715-acre purchase and shorefront conservation easement at Virginia Lake.

A sanctuary for seabirds

The Brimstone Islands, located two-and-one-half miles southeast of Vinalhaven, are a magnet for seabirds. The state Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife considers the islands, together with the archipelago in which they lie, to be one of the most important wildlife areas in Penobscot Bay.

At this time of year, flocks of oldsquaws, common eiders and scoters, accompanied by a few loons, seek the shelter of the relatively calmer waters within the archipelago.

As the days lengthen and the weather begins to warm, the oldsquaws and scoters fly north to their breeding grounds in Canada. But the Brimstones are the destination of scores of other seabirds. Common eiders come ashore to build their down-lined nests in the shelter of the islands' grasses and shrubs, sharing space with herring and great black-backed gulls. Black guillemots return from the open seas of the north Atlantic to nest in rocky crevices along the shore. As the summer in the southern hemisphere wanes, Leach's storm petrels fly from the South Atlantic to Brimstone Island to begin the summer anew and raise their young. By July, the islands are full of new life.

Both 37-acre Brimstone Island and five-acre Little Brimstone Island have been registered by the state Critical Areas Program for their nesting seabird populations. According to Sue Woodward of the state Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife Nongame Program, 200 pairs of common eiders, 200 pairs of black guillemots, 80 pairs of herring gulls, 10 pairs of great black-backed gulls, and five pairs of Leach's storm petrels nested on Brimstone Island in 1986. Last year's

survey also counted 100 pairs of black-back gulls, 50 pairs of common eiders, 25 pairs of herring gulls, 10 pairs of black guillemots, and one pair of spotted sandpipers on Little Brimstone.

Ten years ago, 485 pairs of common eiders nested on Little Brimstone. Last year, IF&W biologists found evidence of avian cholera, which could well be the cause of the eider colony's decline. In time, it is hoped that the colony will recover to its former size.

Brimstone Island has two beautiful tombolos (beaches or bars that connect two islands), including one made of polished black basalt pebbles. The island is treeless, and the view from the height of land, over 100 feet above the water and neighboring islands, is tremendous—a 360-degree panorama scanning the breadth of Penobscot Bay and out to sea.

Little Brimstone Island is covered with grasses and shrubs. Its shore is a prime pupping area and haul-out for harbor seals.

The Brimstone Islands, together with Holden Ledge, a tidal ledge east of the Brimstones, came to the Maine Chapter as a gift from Sheila English, Elinor Montgomery and Alexander White. In addition to their exceptionally generous donation of the islands, they have established a permanent endowment to provide for stewardship and long-term management of the islands.

The wild and unspoiled Brimstone Islands attract a wide diversity of nesting seabirds because they offer a safe and quiet haven. Through their gift to the Conservancy, the donors have ensured that there will always be a seabird sanctuary on the Brimstone Islands.



Kent Wommack

Pickering Island

Pickering Island Easement

Forested island in Penobscot Bay

This highly scenic and heavily wooded island is a prominent landmark for sailors of East Penobscot Bay. Known for its 13 splendid sand and gravel beaches, Pickering Island is part of an archipelago of undeveloped and beautiful islands, many of which have already been protected by the Conservancy and other conservation agencies. Pickering is grouped with Great Spruce Head, Bradbury, Sheep, Scott, and Barred Islands, all protected by the Conservancy, as well as several seabird nesting islands owned by the state. The islands and headlands in this part of the bay are also important roosting and nesting sites for bald eagles and ospreys.

A conservation easement, given to the Conservancy by David and Virginia Wakelin, will protect Pickering Island and the two small islands barred to it that are known locally as "The Little Pickering Islands." In addition to their donation of the conservation easement, the Wakelins also gave a generous contribution toward future monitoring and management of the island easement.

David Wakelin is a former chairman, vice-chairman and trustee of the Maine Chapter. He and his wife, both Life Members of the Conservancy, purchased Pickering Island with the intent of preserving it. By giving this conservation easement to the Conservancy, they have helped ensure that the island will remain beautiful and unspoiled for future generations.



Kent Wommack

Brimstone Island, with tombolo beach in the foreground.

One of Maine's largest populations

A 46-acre conservation easement, given in memory of Gladys I. Briggs by her family, will preserve one of Maine's largest and healthiest stands of the small whorled pogonia (*Isotria medeoloides*). The plants were discovered by her son, an environmental consultant and botanist, who has a great interest in this poorly understood and exceptionally rare orchid. He has carefully monitored the plant population since his discovery, and will continue to do so for the Conservancy.

The small whorled pogonia is a light green orchid that grows in small colonies scattered throughout the northeastern United States. It was given federal endangered species status in 1982, and is

proposed for listing as a state endangered species under the new endangered plant act passed by the state Legislature last spring.

In 1980, the entire known world population for the small whorled pogonia was 200 individual plants. During the past few years, botanists have discovered a number of new sites, bringing the known world population to just over 3,400. Nearly a quarter of the world's small whorled pogonias are found in Maine. With the addition of this conservation easement, the Maine Chapter, with the help of botanists and several concerned landowners, has protected more than half of Maine's known population.



On your Maine tax form

Don't forget to support the Maine Endangered and Nongame Wildlife Program by using the check-off on your Maine tax return.

Eleven vertebrate species have disappeared from Maine in the last 150 years. We now lose about one species every ten years. The official list of Maine Endangered and Threatened Vertebrate Species, recently signed into law by the Commissioner of Fish and Wildlife, names 94 species of birds, mammals, herps, and fish.

The Nongame Program created the list in cooperation with the Maine Chapter's Natural Heritage Program and many independent naturalists and scientists to focus attention on those vertebrate species that require special attention to survive.

Many wildlife species require special environmental conditions to survive. Perhaps the most important, and one that we have most control over, is habitat. Loss of wildlife habitat for endangered and rare species is occurring at an unprecedented pace in Maine today.

The Nongame Program works to identify the distribution and abundance of these species, thereby identifying sensitive or critical habitats. Ultimately the information will aid in creating management and protection strategies for imperiled species such as those in the following list. The Nongame Program is a vital ally of The Nature Conservancy—please give them your support.

wetlands

Blandings turtle, loon, osprey, great blue heron

coastal islands

bald eagle, roseate, common and arctic terns

sand dunes and beaches

least tern and piping plover

shorebird roosting and breeding areas

black-bellied plover, least sandpiper, dunlin, short-billed dowitcher, sanderling, ruddy turnstone

traditional nesting sites

bald eagle, golden eagle, peregrine falcon, great blue heron, egret



the director's corner

by J. Mason Morfit, executive director

As we hoped it would be, this issue of *Maine Legacy* is a summation and celebration of the Chapter's land conservation achievements in 1986. Some 2,500 acres of prime natural land, worth an estimated \$1.5 million, were brought under formal Conservancy protection in the past year.

The Conservancy can be justifiably proud of its institutional role in protecting the best of Maine's natural heritage. However, we should also be the first to acknowledge that, with one exception, all of the properties protected in 1986 came as outright gifts from thoughtful and generous landowners. Dozens of additional landowners entered into voluntary agreements which will bring some measure of protection to 19 sites (not counted in the acres and dollars figures above) supporting a variety of rare plants and animals throughout the state. We are deeply grateful to these individuals (and the legions of other land donors before them) for making the Conservancy's accomplishments possible.

The Conservancy can't protect land that hasn't been protected by someone else up until the time we acquire it. Sometimes, the protection afforded by previous owners is simply the result of benign neglect; occasionally, the previous owner's "protection" is unintended and reluctant, the result of an inability to develop or exploit the property. Most often, however,

lands given to the Conservancy are entrusted to it by owners who have cared for it for years, who care deeply about its protection in the future years, but who also believe that the Conservancy will be better able to discharge that responsibility than they will over the long term.

That's why the Conservancy's institutional strength is important. The vast majority of land donors who care about their properties wouldn't given them to the Conservancy unless they felt that we had the professional management skills, the financial resources, and the organizational commitment to assure their protection for future generations.

And that's where you, the Conservancy's individual members and supporters, come in...with current contributions that make it possible to realize new land conservation opportunities as they arise, and with critically important bequests and other endowment gifts that assure the Conservancy's capacity to manage its protected lands in the decades and centuries ahead.

In 1986, as in previous years, the Conservancy's supporters gave generously of their land, their dollars, and their time. And, once again, our collective achievements were impressive. Speaking for the staff, thank you...it's a pleasure working with you.

update

Big Reed campaign

(In late spring last year, the Maine Chapter committed itself to the largest fund-raising campaign in its history: \$1.1 million to protect a 3,800-acre area around Big Reed Pond, about 20 miles north of Baxter State Park. Less than 4/100th of 1 percent of Maine's original 17-million-plus-acre forest remains in its primeval, uncut condition; better than 75 percent of that old growth is found at Big Reed Pond, the largest unprotected virgin forest wilderness in New England.)

As a result of year-end negotiations, the Conservancy's acquisition of Big Reed Pond has been deferred from December 31, 1986 to June 2, 1987. At the same time, the Conservancy's commitment to purchase the property has been strengthened through a purchase option, a legal instrument obligating the current owners to sell the property to us if we tender the previously negotiated purchase price by the beginning of June.

The Conservancy sought the purchase deferral because fund-raising was proving more difficult than anticipated. At the beginning of the fourth quarter of 1986, we had less than \$200,000 cash in hand against cash due at closing of almost \$800,000. (In addition to the purchase price, the \$1.1 million campaign includes a permanent stewardship endowment, transaction costs, and interest on borrowed funds.) With uncertain expectations about new cash gifts in the final three months of the year, it appeared quite possible that the Conservancy might have to borrow on the order of \$500,000 to complete the purchase by December 31.

To secure the deferral and obtain the option, the Conservancy made a partial payment of approximately \$125,000.



Big Reed Pond

While this payment will be applied in full to the purchase price, it is not refundable in the extremely unlikely event that the Conservancy elects not to exercise its option in June.

Fortunately, by year-end, several generous gifts had improved the Conservancy's fund-raising position significantly, bringing total cash and pledges to approximately \$525,000—almost half the \$1.1 million campaign goal.

The foundation of our fund-raising to date has been provided by the Conservancy's "immediate family": current and former Chapter trustees, members of the national Board of Governors, and Chapter staff. Together, these 25 individuals have so far contributed almost \$160,000—or approximately 15 percent of the total goal for Big Reed Pond.

Unfortunately, space limitations preclude mention here of all the generous gifts from friends of the Conservancy that have been received so far. We cannot fail to mention, however, one particularly magnificent gift of \$100,000, received on the last day of 1986, which will be used to establish

a portion of Big Reed Pond as a memorial to the late Thomas Irving Crowell.

That's the good news. The less good news is that, in completing the first half of the Big Reed Pond campaign, the Conservancy has already sought the help of many of its oldest and best friends. To complete the second half of the campaign, we will have to find many new friends, currently unknown to us, who will contribute much of the \$575,000 yet to go.

And we will have to do so as quickly as possible. Many of the contributions made to date are in the form of pledges, some payable over several years. As a result, even with good fund-raising progress in the next few months, we are likely to have to borrow on the order of \$250,000 to close the purchase in June.

With the help and support of every Chapter member, we will be able to save the Big Reed forest wilderness. If you would like to make a major contribution to this effort, please call Mason Morfit or Kent Wommack at the Chapter office. Also, watch for a special Big Reed Pond update in your mail early this spring.



SPECIAL ISSUE:

A look at
the chapter's new lands



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